

# HOUSE BILL 409

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By: **Delegates Parrott, Metzgar, and Shoemaker**

Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2015

Assigned to: Ways and Means

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Election Law – Primary Elections and Early Voting – Dates**

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a primary election from being held on certain holidays;  
4 requiring a primary election that would otherwise be held on the date of a certain  
5 holiday to instead be held on a certain date after the holiday; prohibiting an early  
6 voting center from being open for voting on certain holidays; and generally relating  
7 to the dates of primary elections and early voting.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
9 Article – Election Law  
10 Section 8–201 and 10–301.1  
11 Annotated Code of Maryland  
12 (2010 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
14 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

15 **Article – Election Law**

16 8–201.

17 (a) (1) There shall be a statewide primary election in every even–numbered  
18 year.

19 (2) **[A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION, A**  
20 primary election shall be held:

21 (i) in the year in which the Governor is elected, on the last Tuesday  
22 in June; and

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (ii) in the year in which the President of the United States is elected,  
2 on the first Tuesday in April.

3 (b) [In] **EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION, IN**  
4 Baltimore City, there shall be a primary election for municipal offices on the first Tuesday  
5 in April in the year in which the President of the United States is elected.

6 (c) (1) **A PRIMARY ELECTION MAY NOT BE HELD ON ANY OF THE**  
7 **FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS:**

8 (i) **PURIM;**

9 (ii) **PASSOVER;**

10 (iii) **GOOD FRIDAY;**

11 (iv) **EASTER;**

12 (v) **THE FIRST DAY OF RAMADAN;**

13 (vi) **ROSH HASHANAH; OR**

14 (vii) **YOM KIPPUR.**

15 (2) **IF SUBSECTION (A) OR (B) OF THIS SECTION REQUIRES THAT A**  
16 **PRIMARY ELECTION BE HELD ON A DAY SPECIFIED IN PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS**  
17 **SUBSECTION, THE PRIMARY ELECTION SHALL BE HELD 7 DAYS AFTER THE DAY**  
18 **SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (A) OR (B) OF THIS SECTION.**

19 10-301.1.

20 (a) Except as provided under Title 9, Subtitle 3 of this article, during any  
21 regularly scheduled primary or general election a voter may vote:

22 (1) in the voter's assigned precinct on election day; or

23 (2) at an early voting center in the voter's county of residence on any early  
24 voting day in accordance with this section.

25 (b) (1) Each county shall have at least one early voting center established in  
26 the county as prescribed in this subsection.

27 (2) A county with fewer than 125,000 registered voters shall have one early  
28 voting center established in the county.

1           (3) A county with more than 125,000 registered voters but fewer than  
2 300,000 registered voters shall have three early voting centers established in the county.

3           (4) A county with more than 300,000 registered voters but fewer than  
4 450,000 registered voters shall have five early voting centers established in the county.

5           (5) A county with more than 450,000 registered voters shall have eight  
6 early voting centers.

7           (6) In addition to the early voting centers required in this subsection, each  
8 county may establish one additional early voting center if the State Board, in collaboration  
9 with the local board, and the governing body of the county agree to establish an additional  
10 early voting center.

11          (c) No later than 6 months before a primary election, the State Board, in  
12 collaboration with the local board in each county, shall designate each early voting center  
13 in that county.

14          (d) **(1) [Each] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS**  
15 **SUBSECTION, EACH** early voting center shall be open for voting as follows:

16           **[(1)] (I)** beginning the second Thursday before a primary or general  
17 election through the Thursday before the election; and

18           **[(2)] (II)** during the following hours:

19           **[(i)] 1.** in a presidential general election, during the hours  
20 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. each early voting day; and

21           **[(ii)] 2.** in all other elections, during the hours between 10 a.m.  
22 and 8 p.m. each early voting day.

23          **(2) AN EARLY VOTING CENTER MAY NOT BE OPEN FOR VOTING ON ANY**  
24 **OF THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS:**

25           **(I) PURIM;**

26           **(II) PASSOVER;**

27           **(III) GOOD FRIDAY;**

28           **(IV) EASTER;**

29           **(V) THE FIRST DAY OF RAMADAN;**

1                                   **(VI) ROSH HASHANAH; OR**

2                                   **(VII) YOM KIPPUR.**

3           (e)     Each early voting center shall satisfy the requirements of § 10–101 of this  
4 title.

5           (f)     Beginning 30 days prior to each early voting period the State Board and each  
6 local board shall undertake steps to inform the public about early voting and the location  
7 of early voting centers in each county, including:

8                   (1)     a series of public service media announcements;

9                   (2)     mailings to all registered voters in each county; and

10                  (3)     other measures as appropriate.

11           (g)     Except as expressly provided in this section, any provision of this article that  
12 applies to voting on election day also applies to early voting.

13           (h)     The State Board shall adopt regulations and guidelines in accordance with the  
14 requirements of this section for the conduct of early voting.

15           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
16 1, 2015.